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*The Elements of English Grammar.* By GEORGE PHILIP KRAPP, Columbia University. New York: Scribner's, 1908. Pp. 271. \$0.80 net.

There are many good things in this book, as one may see at a glance who has ever been tempted to write an elementary English Grammar. No language is so superior to its grammar as the English, and the teacher of English has no more difficult task than to make clear to beginners grammatical definitions and grammatical distinctions. It is, perhaps, this standing challenge that lures many a man, trained or untrained, novice and expert alike, to try his hand at it.

But while there is much that is good, there is also much which might so easily be better that one lays the book down, in the end, with a feeling of disappointment. For instance, turn to the treatment of "Transitive" and "Intransitive Verbs" (pp. 129, 130). Reversing the order, I take up the "Intransitive" first: "An intransitive verb is one in which the action of the verb does not pass over from the subject causing the action to an object immediately affected by the action, but in which the action is completely expressed by the subject and predicate. Intransitive verbs, therefore, do not have objects." For a definition of that length could anything be better?

Now let us turn to "Transitive Verbs": "A transitive verb is one in which the assertion of the verb passes over from one person or thing, the grammatical subject, from which or whom the action proceeds, to another person or thing, the grammatical object, which is directly affected by the action of the verb. Every sentence which contains an object must contain a transitive verb." Could anything, I ask this time, be worse? The definition is repeated under a "Summary of Definitions" on p. 190. In the example given, "The hunter *shot* the squirrel," it is, evidently, not "the assertion" that passed over from the subject to the object "directly affected"—squirrels are not killed that way. And in the next example, "Charles *whistled* a tune"—isn't *tune* the object *effected*? If so, then the example should come under "Cognate Object," on the next page, along with "The boys *ran* a *race*." With respect to objects, between "The boy whistled a tune" and "The dog bit the boy" there is a painful difference.

Under "Cognate Object" a new grammatical principle is introduced: "Some verbs which are usually intransitive become transitive when they are followed by an object of like meaning. This object is called the Cognate Object. Examples: He *sleeps* (intransitive); He sleeps the *sleep* of the just (transitive)." If this be true, the definitions of the preceding page fall to pieces. The addition of the cognate object does not make the verb transitive; *sleep* is the object *effected*, the act is still confined to the subject, and the verb remains intransitive. The object most "directly affected" by the action of the verb is the passenger in the next berth, who hears the just man "letting off sleep," and prays for a collision.

Under "Imperative Mood" (187), among genuine examples, are found: "God *grant* you prosperity," "So *be* it," which are not of this mood at all, but subjunctives. Under "Mood" (184) the author says "the question of mood is of importance only in those few occurrences of the subjunctive in which a separate form is used to indicate the subjunctive." This, then, is of importance, as the indicative would be "God grants" and "So it is," the imperative being out of the question. Grammarians seem to vie with one another in their endeavor to com-

pose a fitting epitaph on the English subjunctive, but, in the meanwhile, the English subjunctive continues to be quite lively—for a corpse—as, witness these two that got in the wrong box.

Under "Verb Phrases with *had*" is the example, "*He had better not come at all than come too late, or He would better not come at all than come too late.*" So *would better not come* has won recognition at last! It has long since been "newspaper English," and might still serve as a useful example of "schoolmaster's English," the kind that parses easily and adapts itself readily to the Diagram, that Apollyon of effective idiom. It must needs be that offenses come, but the woe, I thought, had been pronounced only against the diagrammarians of America. The *New English Dictionary* (under "Better") devotes a paragraph to *had better*, but there is no hint of any *would better*.

Verbs are classified as "Regular" or "Irregular." Regular verbs are said to be formed "by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the uninflected form of the present;" and yet *hear* is found in the list of irregular verbs! Ought not grammarians to show faith enough in their own rules to follow them?

The grammar closes with a chapter on "Analysis and Diagram," in which are displayed the familiar pitchforks and grasshopper skeletons.

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EDWARD A. ALLEN

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*A Selected List of Plays for Amateurs and Students of Dramatic Expression in Schools and Colleges.* By S. A. MCFADDEN AND L. E. DAVIS. Cincinnati, 1908. Pp. 96.

With the growth of interest in the drama among high schools and colleges has come a demand for plays suitable in moral tone and literary distinction for amateur production. To everyone, therefore, interested in amateur acting *A Selected List of Plays*, compiled by Elizabeth A. McFadden and Lillian E. Davis, will be a great boon. In this book are contained the names of some five hundred plays, with the name of the publisher, the price, a brief description of the nature of the play, the number of characters, and, in a word, just the information needed for the intelligent selecting of a play. The book is on sale by Miss McFadden, Box 328, Cincinnati, Ohio.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

S. H. CLARK

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*The Demonstration Schools Record.* Edited by J. J. FINDLAY. Manchester: The University Press, 1908. Pp. 126. Price, 1s. 6d. net.

This is the second number in the "Manchester University Educational Series," the first of which was Dr. Sadler's *Continuation Schools in England and Elsewhere*. The editor of the present number, Professor Findlay, has been active in bringing to English schools the results of the work of two men who have influenced him professionally—first, as an outcome of his studies at Jena—Herbart, and, later, Dr. Dewey. In the first volume of the *University of Chicago Record* is published an address at Chicago by Professor Findlay in which he recalls Kant's interest in the idea of an experimental school and discusses the need and possibilities of that phase of school activity. Recently he has brought together in a small shilling book a representative collection of